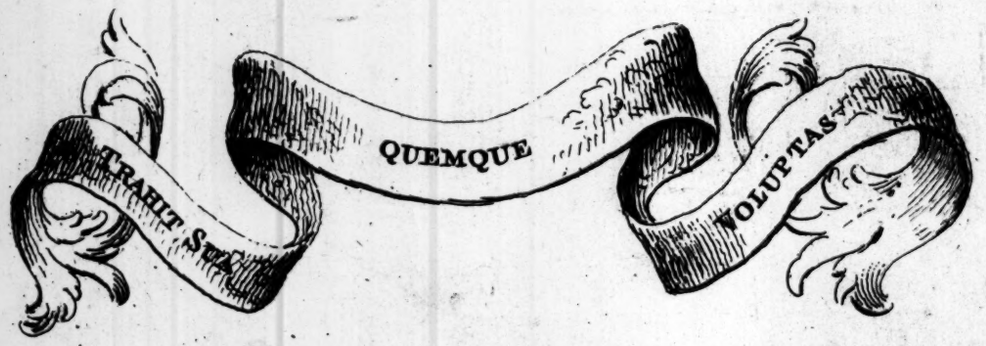


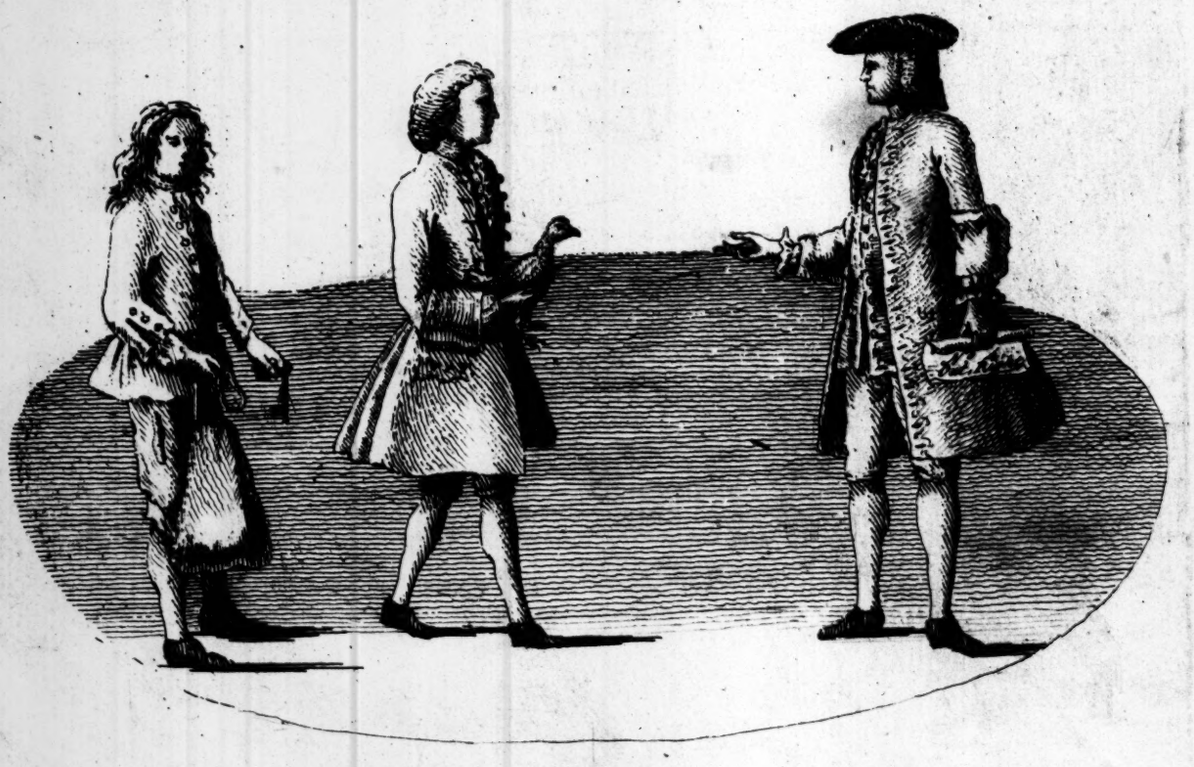

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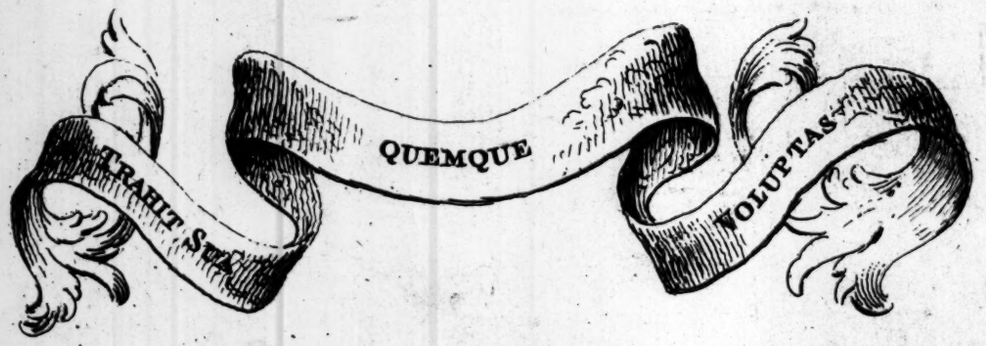


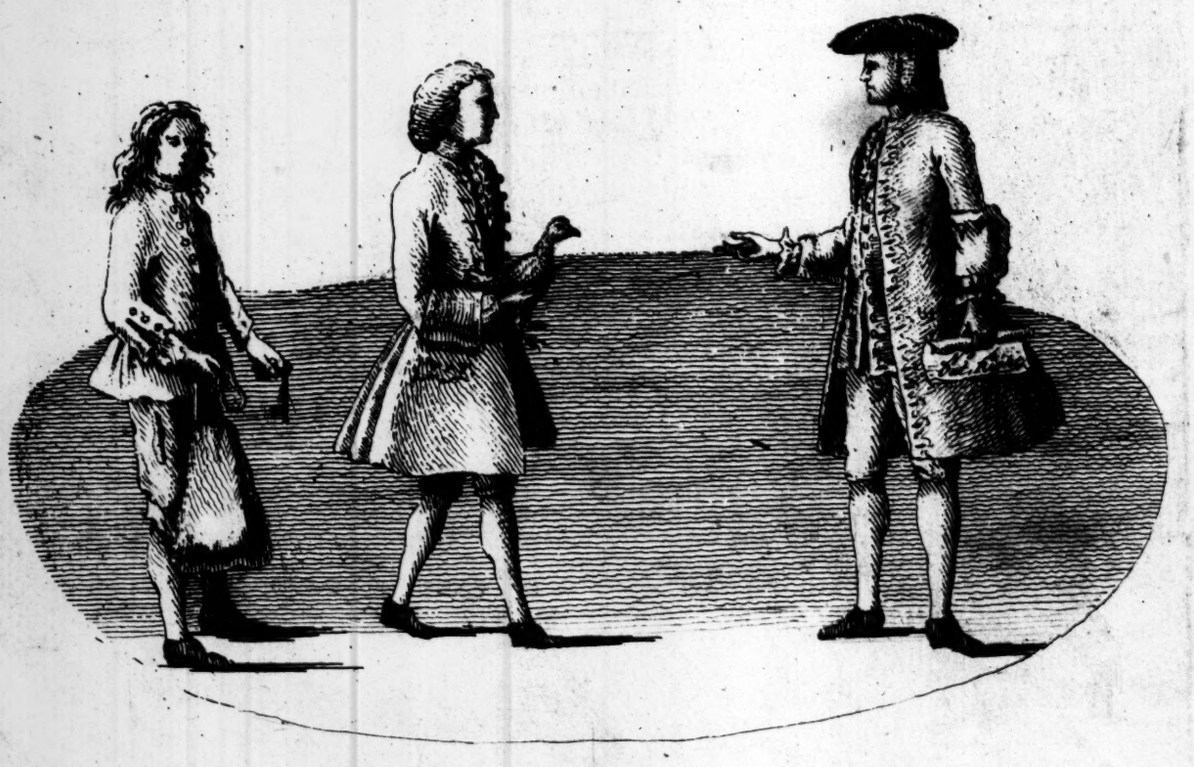

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# THE COCKER: A POEM.

IN

*Imitation of* Virgil's *Third* Georgic.

HUMBLY INSCRIB'D

TO THE

Honourable Society of Sportſmen

AT

# GRANTHAM.

By *Iſaac Hallam.*

*Ingentes Animos angusto in Pectore verſant.* Virg.

*Stamford:* Printed by *Francis Howgrave,* 1742.

WILLSON COLLECTION Lincoln.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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THE

# DEDICATION,

TO THE

# Honourable Society of Sportſmen

AT

# GRANTHAM.

GENTLEMEN,

AS the Diverſion of Cock-Fighting is daily growing into Eſteem, and has for ſeveral Years been my favourite Amuſement, and alſo attended with a Series of Succeſs, I humbly beg Leave to offer my Opinion towards the Improvement of the preſent Engliſh Breed, for tho' generally ſuppoſed a Diverſion peculiar to this Nation, 'tis truly, of no modern Date, but divers Centuries ago practis'd in the Iſle of Rhodes, and alſo at Pergamus, as appears by the following Quotation from Pliny the Hiſtorian, who ſays in the 10th Book and 21ſt Chapter of



his

his natural Hiſtory (viz.) "That every Year at the City of Pergamus "was exhibited openly to the People a ſolemn Shew of Cock-Fighting, "and where the Game Sort were in the greateſt Perfection;" from whence we may reaſonably infer its Origin deriv'd, and which probable Account methinks contradicts the common Opinion of their Degeneracy abroad, and which I rather believe is owing more to improper Management than any other Reaſon; ſo in order to propagate and eſtabliſh the genuine Kind, I have preſum'd to offer the following Eſſay for your Approbation, and conſequently have addreſs'd it to you as the moſt diſtinguiſhing Judges.

Tho' notwithſtanding theſe Sentiments in Breeding of Game-Fowl are govern'd by the moſt ſtrict Obſervations and Variety of repeated Tryals, the only ſure Means whereby to form a proper Judgment, yet, as it was only deſign'd for an innocent Amuſement to paſs an idle Hour with, ſo I flatter myſelf before you precipitately condemn it, that you will candidly conſider this Precept of Horace, (viz.)

—— Si quid noviſti rectius iſtis,
Candidus imperti, ſi non, his utere mecum.

For ſince Gentlemen of the firſt Rank have encouraged the Diverſion, and are grown ſolicitous in Breeding, as being truly ſenſible they are ſooner furniſhed with a ſufficient Number of Cocks than a compleat Stud of Horſes, and conſequently as Cocking is attended with leſs Expence than Horſe-Racing, and likewiſe not ſo liable to Frauds, of which I am well aſſur'd the modern Grooms have given the moſt flagrant Proofs; perhaps this Attempt of mine, to promote a more curious Breed, may induce and ſpirit up ſome more judicious Sportſman to accompliſh what I have but too curſorily handled.

Did

# The Dedication.

Did Gentlemen of valetudinary Habits but conſider that Hunting or Racing are too active and laborious Exerciſes for ſuch as are of thin and emaciated Conſtitutions, I am apt to believe they would not ſo eagerly purſue ſuch Diverſion, ſo hazardous to their Health, and even frequently their Lives, eſpecially as I am conſcious a greater Share of Exerciſe attends the Breeding and Management of a Number of Fowl ſufficient for any common Match than what the generality of Breeders are appriz'd of.

For 'till Gentlemen naturally take as much Pleaſure in the Breeding Part as they do in the Fighting, 'tis certainly great Odds that they ever attain to or acquire any compleat Breed or Number of Fowl; ſince one Error committed in that Branch may even effect and ruin a whole Race, and conſequently looſe two or three Seaſons in Breeding.

For what Method or Rules ſoever can avail if due Regard is not paid to this particular Care, (viz.) as Game-Fowl are frequently hatch'd under Dunghil Hens, it is incumbent, methinks, on the judicious Breeder to inſpect and ſhyer every Seat of Eggs before the Time of Hatching, in order to prevent any other Sort from being caſually laid amongſt them, a Caution I am afraid too many have paſs'd by as trifling and indifferent, and for want of which not improbably deſtroy'd many a compleat Breed, and ſurely this one Reflection ſhou'd prompt every Breeder's Inclinations to be ſtrictly curious.

Tho' truly 'tis not only proper on that Account, but alſo to eaſe the Sitting Hen, in throwing aſide thoſe which are addle, and from being crowded with too great a Number, a Fault indeed too many Breeders are guilty of in the Winter Seaſon.

# The Dedication.

Thus, Gentlemen, if the Method I have preſcrib'd be honour'd with your Approbation, I hope it will in ſome meaſure make amends for the Ruggedneſs and Incligance of the Poetry; however, if it contributes but in any Reſpect to your future Diverſion and Amuſement, it will entirely add to the Satisfaction of

*GENTLEMEN,*

*Your moſt oblig'd,*

*And devoted humble Servant,*

**Iſaac Hallam.**

# THE COCKER.

## A POEM.

YE Britiſh Sons, and all ye tuneful Nine,
Propitious now your ſacred Infl'ence join;
Whilſt I, adventrous Bard, preſume to ſoar
With callow Wing, and trackleſs Paths explore;

In

In Maro's heav'nly Strain ſublimely raiſe
My artleſs Theme, and crown my daring Lays,
And tho' too raſh I quote his ſacred Name,
Let not my Muſe the god-like Bard prophane,
Or ſhroud the Palm of his immortal Fame.

A Patriot Zeal now fires my grateful Heart,
To ſing the warlike Cock, and Breeding Rules impart.

For oh! what Debt Brittannia's Sons muſt owe,
Beyond whate'er theſe artleſs Lays beſtow,

The

**The warlike Britiſh Cock, whoſe valiant Race**

*** Once bleſs'd the Land with Liberty and Peace.**

**Attend**

---

* The following Account, to which the preceding Lines allude, is recorded in ſome of our Engliſh Hiſtories.

In early Times a foreign Enemy commencing a War, an Engliſh Gentleman then Reſident at his Court happily procuring ſome Game Cocks, ſent an Invitation to ſome of that Nation to partake of the Diverſion, whoſe Unacquaintance with their undaunted Fierceneſs, and natural Enmity ſo ſurprizingly diſcouraged them, by ſuggeſting thoſe Talents to be equally or rather greater in the hardy Briton, that they immediately relinquiſh'd the Thoughts of War, and left us to reap the Advantage of their Cowardice by a ſettled Peace and Tranquility.

Attend ye Sportſmen, whoſe ſuperior Sway
A Sanction gives, and guide the genial Lay,
Indulge a while the Poet's wand'ring Muſe,
And all the COCKER in the Bard infuſe,

Till I the Breeding Art preſume to trace,

And ſing the warlike Genius of the plumy Race.

But firſt the Sire, propitious Muſe, declare,
Whoſe *Shape* diſtinguiſh with peculiar Care,

Since

Since what the curious-form'd acquire in Height,
The diſproportion'd looſe by uſeleſs Weight,
For oft o'rematch'd the ſhapeleſs Pullen ſhow,
By Legs too ſhort, and Forehands form'd too low.
High-bearing Fowl th' Advantage moſt acquire
To charge the Foe, and ward againſt his Ire,
Whilſt Cocks that mope beneath the tow'ring Foe,
By lofty Springs unnerve their fruitleſs Blow.

Thus Duck-leg'd Fowl with curv'd or dinted Breaſt,

And Forehands ſhort become the Sportſman's Jeſt.

The Shape approv'd and by the Muſe diſplay'd,

Shou'd like the conick Sugar-Loaf be made.

Whoſe taper Point ſhou'd nicely form the Tail,

And o'er the Breaſt the broader Part prevail,

While lengthy Forehands Sportſmen chiefly prize,

That in the Form of Rainbow circling riſe.

The Feeder thus exulting Fondneſs ſhows,
And lur'd by Shape with Emulation glows,

When form'd like *BEAU his dext'rous Hand
diſplays
A fav'rite Cock, that vig'rous Life betrays.

Then wiſely cull from all the Warrior Kind
A blooming Sire, that ſuits the Marks defin'd,
Full breaſted form'd, yet taper, thin, behind,
In all the ſtately Pride of Nature dreſt,
With glitt'ring Plume, and florid youthful Creſt,



* A favourite Cock of the Author's, ſo call'd from his curious Shape.

Whoſe nervous Limbs ſtretch'd o're the graſſy Plain,

His arch'd turn'd Neck and Corps robuſt ſuſtain,

With Hawk-like Beak, and piercing watchful Eye,

Prompt to deceive, or ready to defy

His adverſe Foe, when pitted in the Ring

They wounding claſh, and flutter on the Wing,

Till Death alone their envious Wars compound,

And force the conquer'd Foe to bite the Ground.

Sing Muſe the Cauſe, the fatal Source diſcloſe,

Whence ſuch dire Enmity remorſeleſs 'roſe.

When Nature firſt the warlike Cock deſign'd,

Venus and Mars, ſuperior Infl'ence, join'd,

To ſwell his Heart and form his daring Soul,

Where Love and Jealouſy tumultuous roll.

For ſoon as Love his youthful Breaſt inſpires,

Indignant Rage his haughty Genius fires.

The

The tempting Fair he ſeeks with eager Pace,

And woo's her to him with peculiar Grace;

Now proudly ſtruts, elate with martial Pride,

Now drops his Wings, and ſtalks along her Side,

Now boldly treads, and ſooths the yielding Bride;

Then ſounds Alarm, and jealous of his Foe,

Spleen, Rage, and Love, alternate Paſſions, glow:

Each am'rous Glance the daring Rival ſhews,

Or Step advanc'd, his jealous Wrath purſues.

For

For Love's Impulſe, exempt of Reaſon's Aid,

In ſenſual Brutes is uncontroll'd obey'd;

But god-like Reaſon, crown'd with ev'ry Grace,

Diſtinguiſh'd ſhines in Man's ſuperior Race,

To calm his Paſſions and his Will control,

And form the Conduct of his nobler Soul.

Thus fir'd with Love and ſtung with proud Diſ-

dain,

Th' imperious Chief intrepid ſtalks the Plain,

Whilſt

Whilſt ſcouring o'er the Lawn and verdant Meads,

His ſwelling Voice the furious Lion dreads.

The Cock exulting with elated Crow,

And Pinions ſounding dares the haughty Foe;

Nor ſhuns the War, nor from his Rival flies,

But Victor reigns, or all diſdainful dies.

Hence jealous Fears th' intrepid Warrior fire,

Inceſſant rage and future Wars inſpire.

His

His Colour now remark; the Beſt are ſaid
To be the Tawny, Black, the Grey and Red.
The *Curkoo* ſhun, a ſoft degen'rate Race,
Which oft th' intrepid Foe reluctant face.
Yet modern Sportſmen with Indiff'rence prize
What colour'd Fowl you fight, ſo Dagger-heel'd they riſe,
And facing Danger ſpurn the threat'ning Foe,
Swift to revenge returning Blow for Blow.

Thus form'd the *Sire*: Again, O Muſe, diſplay
Thy ſacred Pow'r, and tune th' harmonious Lay,
Whilſt I, preſumptuous Bard, progreſſive rhime,
The Seaſon ſing, and fix the Breeding Time,
When Nature prompts and vig'rous Spring conſpires
To warm the circling Blood with genial Fires.
*March*, *April*, *May*, judicious Breeders find
The *only* Months to propagate their Kind.

Let

Let not too *ſmall a Size* your Breed diſgrace,

But timely warn'd, avoid the dwarfiſh Race.

The puny Strain will ſoon too languid grow

To dart the Heel, and ſpurn the threat'ning Foe:

Then fix betimes the Hens and blooming Sire,

Since early Fowl ſuperior Size acquire.

For Autumn Chicks will ſcarce the Rearing pay,

So ſmall the ſtarving Brood, ſo Duck-leg'd they;

Which frequent vary from the Stock they grow,
For numb'd with Morning Dews their Limbs advance too ſlow.

Oft in three circling Years his ſprightly Bloom
Impair'd we find by too great Length of Plume,
His ample Hack too looſe a Texture wears,
And dangling o'er his Throat a Muff-like Plumage bears.

This if diſcern'd, no more increaſe his Breed,
But ſubſtitute Another in his ſtead;

Left languid grown he balk the craving Hen,

Deceive your Fancy and you breed in vain;

Tho' if the Sire in vig'rous Bloom appears,

And gayly plum'd, dread not his Length of Years.

The Hens indeed a longer Date I find,

Retain the Pow'r to propagate their Kind;

And by judicious Sportſmen 'tis agreed

That on the *Female Strain* depends the nobler Breed:

Nor

Nor did I once from * RUCKING Hens e'er know

Diff'rence in Breed, which ſome pretend to ſhow.

But ſhun thoſe *Eggs* where Sol's diffuſive Rays

Dart thro' their Shells, and with Refulgence blaze,

For

---

* The Rucking of a Hen is a peculiar Cry for three or four Days before Sitting or Brooding her Eggs, and is only an Impulſe of Nature, ſhewing her intenſe Deſire of producing her Kind.

This ſome injudiciouſly ſuppoſe a State of Degeneracy, and the Reaſon they aſſign is, That her Eggs at that Time are remarkably ſmaller, but truly, they don't conſider that the Egg is before impregnate, and the future Progreſs of the Chick has no Reſpect to the Size of the Egg, but only requires a proper Warmth to animate and increaſe it.

The Clucking of a Hen is alſo a diſtinguiſhable Note from the former, tho' not diſcernable till after Hatching, and is probably deſign'd to induce the young Brood to follow her, and covey together; and likewiſe to expreſs her Tenderneſs in Regard to their Suſtenance and Safety.

For ſuch the vital Pow'r extinct declare,

Will addle prove, and fruſtrate all your Care.

Thus curious Breeders by Inſpection know

The forming Chick's impregnate Embryo,

'Ere Incubation half its Pow'r conveys

In rip'ning Life, and * *Shy'ring* this they Phraſe.

As

---

* The Shy'ring of Eggs is perform'd in the following Manner, *(viz.)* the Hen having ſat eight or nine Days, take an Egg in one Hand and hold it againſt the Light with the Crown or broad End uppermoſt, then place your other Hand on the Top or a little over it, and you will perceive it ſettl'd in the Shell, and if the Part ſo fall'n ſhews dark, it denotes a Bird; but if clear or fluctuating and ſtreak'd with Light, it implies the contrary.

As various Hens in diff'rent Shapes appear,

So various Eggs a Form as diff'rent bear ;

Impregnate Females in the * *Round* prevail,

And thoſe *Oblong* diſtinguiſh'd ſhew the Male.

Preſerve your Eggs, with latent Chick replete,

From chilling Cold and too intenſe a Heat ;

For each Extream impairs the vital Pow'r,

And rip'ning Embryo's ſwell the Egg no more.

Nor

* 'Tis generally obſerv'd that the roundeſt Egg proves a Pullet, and the longeſt a Cock.

Nor let them long in one Poſition lie,

But gently turn, and mark with cautious Eye

The lower Part, and oft alternate move

The upper down, and neather Part above,

For in one Poſture fix'd, the Curious ſay,

The pond'rous Yolk's weak Ligaments decay,

Which Egg no more prolifick Pow'r retains,

But all unbrac'd a lifeleſs Maſs remains;

This * Nature ſhews, th' experienc'd Breeder's Guide,

Leſt thro' the fluid White th' inclining Yolk ſubſide.

The wond'rous Shell, concreted Humour, flows

From various Salts, that diff'rent Parts compoſe,

Whoſe concave Side a filmy Texture lines,

Cements the Whole, and all the Bird enſhrines;

Whoſe

---

* 'Tis frequently obſerv'd, during the Time of a Hen's ſitting or brooding her Eggs, that ſhe variouſly turns and removes them from one ſide of the Neſt to the other, which Obſervation not improbably gave Riſe to the approv'd Method of turning and moving them two or three Times a Week in the aforeſaid Manner, as the moſt neceſſary Means for preſerving them found; eſpecially when purpos'd for keeping any conſiderable Time.

Whoſe forming Life at firſt the White ſuſtains,

But more advanc'd the groſſer Yolk maintains.

When tort'ring Pangs the wracking Stone betray,

Or acrid Salts Life's purple Streams convey ;

When Reins inflam'd the turgid Veſſels bind,

And ſerous Parts no Percolation find,

Whence ſtagnate Urine forms inteſtine Strife,

And languid Nature drags on ling'ring Life,

Th' * alkalious Pow'rs, fair Health's reſtoring Balm,

Abſorb the pungent Salts, and oft their Fury calm.

Since various Natures diff'rent Fowl retain,

And by Inſtinct affect their kindred Strain.

Then

---

* Egg-Shells being clear'd from their Skins, dry'd, and finely powder'd, and taken the Quantity of a Drahm two or three Times a Day, are recommended by Decker as a peculiar Remedy in Nephritick Diſorders attended with a Suppreſſion of Urine. *N. B.* If a Decoction of Marſh-Mallows, or a Solution of Gum Arabick, an Ounce in a Quart of Water, be drank a Gill at a Time after each Doſe of the Powders, it would probably contribute to their farther Efficacy.

Then fix, by Nature ſway'd, a * *Siſter Race,*

Whoſe Friendſhip join'd may court the Male's Embrace;

A motley Tribe may chance deceive your Care,

Since Eggs from various Hens ſuch nice Reſemblance bear.

Three ſprightly Hens indulge the am'rous Male,

Nor will, ſhou'd more be join'd, your Breeding fail.

Let

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* The Difficulty and Hazard of diſtinguiſhing the reſpective Eggs of various Hens, and the uncertainty of the ſeveral ſorts being equally Good, ſufficiently ſhew the Imprudence of Breeding from a mixt Sort together; and conſequently a neceſſary Caution, to breed from a Sett of full Siſters.

Let Cocks with Pullets breed, and Stags with Hens,

'Tis ſuch whoſe Race will recompence your Pains;
Yet Cocks with Hens, if not by Age impair'd,
By modern Breeders chiefly are prefer'd,

Tho' Stags with Pullets join'd I frequent find
In Heels and Mettle too preſerve their Kind,
And oft, when dipt in Blood, their Hearts exceed
The martial Fierceneſs of the aged Breed;

When

When dying too, our hopeleſs Thoughts de-
ceive,
Kindled to Wrath their gaſping Lives reprieve,
And to their adverſe Foes ſwift Death bequeath;

Of which my fav'rite Fowl, the * *Jarnil* Strain,
Beyond Diſpute th' aſſerted Truth maintain.

Thus Want of Heels the Reaſon true declares
Their Breed declines, when Fowl advance in
Years,

Since

* A Brood Cock walk'd at one *Jarnil's*, to whoſe Breed the Appellation of *Jarnil* was given.

Since oft the youthful Breed more active are

And mettled prove, than ſluggiſh ag'd, by far.

* Yet ne'er on MAINS let Stags be raſhly try'd,

But full grown Cocks th' important Match decide;

For Stags tho' glowing more with martial Fire,

O'repow'r'd by ſtronger Cocks too frequent tire:

Theſe

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* A neceſſary Caution to avoid being deceiv'd in Stags, which are not ſo eaſily diſtinguiſh'd when early bred, and ſought late in the Seaſon.

Theſe diff'rent Marks peculiar to the Race

Of Stags and Cocks, ye curious Sportſmen, trace;

In Stags the Spurs a *rougher* Surface wear,

And circling round a Ridge diſtinctly bear;

*Unbent* and *ſhorter* too the *blunter* Points appear;

But thoſe in Cocks more *taper* form'd we find,

*Curv'd*, *longer*, *ſmooth*, and of the horny Kind.

Breed near akin, nor croſs too oft the Strain;

Leſt by too frequent Change you breed in vain.

Nor ſcrup'lous ſhun, nor ſuch Diſtinction heed,

What ſome erroneous ſtyle * *inceſtuous* Breed;

By

* 'Tis doubtleſs an abſurd Opinion to think any Breed inceſtuous that ſprings from the Brute Creation, and having read that the Race of Turkiſh Horſes ſeldom degenerates if it is not adulterated by too frequently Changing, I was induc'd to make Tryal of the ſame Method in the Breeding of Game Fowl, and which probably would ſucceed as well in the Generation of Sheep and other Brutes, if not ſo idly perverted by the miſtaken Notion of being *Inceſtuous*, however I have found it effectually anſwer in Poultry, and indeed recommend it as the moſt infallible Rule, to breed from Parent and Offspring, (viz) Father and Daughter, or Mother and Son, or Brother and Siſter, which in the Sportſman's Phraſe is term'd, *Full Blood*.

I have alſo known the Breed exceeding fine where the Brood Hens and Cock are all out of a Hen

By croſſing oft the Race degenerate grows,

And all the *Dunghil* propagated ſhows;

Let Hens and Cock, to form your future Race,

From the ſame Hen their warlike Genius trace;



---

a Hen, but got by a different Cock, or *vice verſa*, where the Brood Cock and Hens are got by the ſame Cock, but out of a different Hen, tho' I chiefly approve of the former; the Hen's Strain being generally allow'd ſuperior and more certain than the Cock's.

Their kindred Strains will nobler Blood inſpire,

And all their Offspring crown with martial Fire:

Th' inverted Rule obſerve will oft prevail,

When Cock and Hens ſpring from one ſprightly Male:

Yet ne'er on *One* peculiar Strain rely,

But diff'rent Fowl with nice Diſtinction try;

Three various Sorts ſufficient Change you'll find

For twice ten Years to raiſe the nobler Kind;

For when repeated Tryals ſhew the Race

To Mars devote, that Breed alone embrace,

Whoſe fatal Heels, enrag'd with Ire, impair

Some noble Part and Scenes of Slaughter bear,

When at each mouthing Blow, or flying Spar

The hoſtile Chiefs engage in direful War;

Since HEELERS more diſtinguiſh'd Merit claim,

Than Cocks ennobl'd with ſuperior Game.

Shou'd

Shou'd e'er a ſpurious Cock your Pullen tread,

Reject their Eggs till *Four* or *Five* are laid,

And then, Experience proves, tho' ſome deny,

A Change enſue, and the falſe Embryo die;

The former Genius of the nobler Strain

A freſh reviv'd, and all reſtor'd again.

For ſince by changing Cocks we frequent find,

The Hen's prolifick Pow'r a while declin'd,

Imagine

Imagine not the whole connected Lay'r

The Taint receive, or ſo degenerate are,

For joint Conſent the genial Fire muſt grace,

Or unprolifick proves the Male's Embrace:

Four Months I've known a blooming Hen to lay,

Nor once indeed a Rucking e'er betray;

And ſome, too vainly prejudic'd, adviſe

To wait that Time, more nice than truly wiſe.

Such

Such * *Notions* then ye Speculiſts diſclaim,

Since Nature's Laws th' Hypotheſis condemn,

For

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* As ſome Objection may ariſe from the Improbability of the preceeding Argument, I humbly beg Leave to tranſcribe a Paſſage from Mr. *Humphrey*'s Tranſlation of *Nature Diſplay'd* Vol. 3. Page 308.

" No Body, ſays he, has hitherto been able to give any intelligible or ſatisfactory Account " concerning the Cauſe of this Principle of Fecundity in an Egg ; we only know in general, " that it reſults from the concurrent Act of two Animals, the one Male, the other Female.

Thus, as the Learned byaſs'd only by Theory, leave undetermin'd ſuch nice Speculations ; ſo I preſume it a reaſonable Inference for the Support of my Opinion, ſince confirm'd by the Teſtimony of repeated Tryals, (viz.) that an Alteration of the Strain enſues from the Removal or Change of one Cock to another, tho' the prolifick Pow'r continues for ſeveral Eggs after the firſt Cock is taken away, if no other immediately ſucceeds him.

However, to convince the Speculiſt, that his Hypotheſes are repugnant to Practice, I humbly entreat the Curious would try the Experiment, as the only means to ſolve ſuch inexplicable Difficulties.

For Practice join'd to Theory we find

Beſt forms the Judgement, and improves the Mind.

Since Errors oft deceive the Breeder's Care

Be ſtrictly cautious and Miſtakes beware ;

" Diſtinguiſh all betimes with branding Fire,

" To note the Tribe, the Lineage, and the Sire,

Nor e'er let Indolence ſo far prevail,

To charge your Mem'ry with the long Detail,

" Dryd. Virg.

But let peculiar Regiſters declare

The martial Race, and various Kinds you rear;

Which to reſerve to raiſe the future Stock,

And which to battle with the warrior Cock.

By Practice taught, the modern Sportſman's Guide,

Let *maiden Fowl* th' important Main decide;

Since ſuch, alone, the nobler Strain declare,

For *old fought Cocks* deceive the niceſt Care.

To crown your Judgement, and your Art diſplay

With more Succeſs; this juſt Remark obey;

Let ample Store compleat your warlike Strain,

And undiſturb'd in private Walks remain;

Till adverſe Foes, by Valour prompt conſpire

With blooming Spring to wake the martial Fire;

Since by removing oft they tainted grow;

For ſuch we find reflect a faded Glow.

Yet chiefly note, e'er you a Contract cloſe,

A ſingle Match, or nobler Main propoſe,

Reflect betimes, and Raſhneſs ne'er betray

But view your Flock, and ſtrictly take Survey;

Ne'er on their claſhing Heels *alone* depend,

Nor let thoſe flatt'ring Hopes deceive your Friend.

Three Months at leaſt let Ceres' bounteous Hand

Open her Stores, and all her Wealth expand;

Since

Since half-bred Fowl, if plenteous corn'd we find

Will beat the nobler Game when ſtarv'd or pin'd;

Tho' hand-ſtrew'd Walks oft damp their martial Fire;

For Cocks ſo fed inactive Sloth acquire;

Then thoſe diſtinguiſh with peculiar Care

Where ratling Flails re-eccho thro' the Air,

Alternate ſound and thraſh the bearded Ear;

Where limpid Streams thro' ſandy Cliffs diſtil,

And grateful Bow'rs o'reſhade the murm'ring Rill;

For

For oft we find the Plumy Race reſort
To lonely Shades, and friendly Shelter court,
When riſing Tempeſts ſwell the foaming Tide,
And ruffling Gales o're crack'ling Foreſts ride,
Or when the Fields a hoary Landskip ſhow
Congeal'd by Froſt, or ſpangled o're with Snow,
Or when the Dog-Star reigns, and Heats intenſely glow;
When rolling Thunder ſhocks the tim'rous Swain,
And dreadful Lightning flaſhes o're the Plain,

When

When pitchy Clouds foreſhew the ratling Show'r,
And ſmoaking down the Skies impetuous pour,
Whence trembling *Atheiſts* dread approaching Fate,
And Heav'n's laſt Trumpet all diſponding wait.

The Heathy-Soil beſts ſuits the warlike Race;
For Clay bound Fields their gloſſy Plumes deface,
And tillage Walks alone the thriving Poultry grace,
Where various Ricks of Straw with ſcatter'd Corn,
Invite them early to ſalute the Morn.

Whence

Whence Exerciſe their craving Hunger fires,

And blooming Health with active Life inſpires;

Which ruddy Look, the ſure Prognoſtick, ſhows

When o're the waving Plume a ſhining Luſtre glows.

Oft too the Tail, when curling down it ſways

Exempt from Pens, a blooming Cock diſplays.

As Nile's vaſt Streams at certain Times o'reflow,

The Soil renew, and various Fruits beſtow,

So blaſting Boreas when the Gods command,

At certain Seaſons taints the fruitful Land.

Then Muſe deſcribing mark the rank Diſeaſe,

That does the Poultry Flock contagious ſeize,

Involving oft with Havock-waſting Pow'r

Whole Broods of Fowl, that ſtalk the Gran'ry Door.

The noiſome *Roop* that from the Norril ſprings,

A putrid Gore, and dire Deſtruction brings,

Incruſts the Tongue, and all the Surface dies

With livid Taint, that noxious Blood implies,

Which faded Plume and flagging Wings denote,

With gaſping, breathleſs Yawn, and wheezing Throat,

And ſneezing oft, portentous Omen too,

With ſcale-like Tongue, the ſickly Craſis ſhew,

Which ſome the Pip define, and idly dream

Impairs the Tongue, and taints the vital Stream;

Which

Which Plaint from muddy Pool and ſtanding Lake,

Their craving parch'd up Crops too craving take,

When thirſty Febris ſwells the ſanguine Tide,

And drinks the purple Life that does revolving glide.

Obſerve, th' Infection claims your timely Aid,

For ſwift as Light'ning does the Miſchief ſpread,

Then quickly, from the *Sound*, the *Sickly* part,

Leſt more they taint, and baffle all your Art,

Since coop'd too cloſe the rank Effluvias riſe,

Which oft infect with frothy Streams their Eyes.

This ſov'reign Balm and grand Specifick note,

To ſmooth the Hoarſneſs of the wheezing Throat;

Green Rue and Sorrel ſhread, whoſe mingled Pow'rs,

Compound with Celadine and * *Sulphur Flow'rs*,

And

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* 'Tis neceſſary to add a little Flower of Brimſtone to the Recipe, not only as a proper Ingredient, but alſo as a requiſite Article to form the Maſs into Pills.

And recent * Cream from neighb'ring Dairies brought,

By curious Art to due Conſiſtence wrought,

O'th' former Three a juſt proportion'd Share,

With Pondus Omnium of the Laſt prepare;

In artful Pills of mod'rate Nutmeg ſize,

Which ſoon I've found retrieve their gaſping Lives;

And which alternate Night let each receive,

Nor idly heſitate but timely give,

When

* Freſh Butter.

When weak Digeſtion curbs the thriving State,

And drooping Life imparts a languid Heat,

Receipts abound, but this I moſt approve

To ſtop the ſpreading Taint, and all their Ills re-
move.

Propitious Nine, again the Bard inſpire,

Tune my rapt Soul and aid the warbling Lyre.

Sublime in Verſe remark the ſanguine Plain,

The hoſtile Combat, and the various Slain;

With

With martial Fire the diff'rent Scenes diſplay,

And image all the Beauties of the Fray.

Diſtinguiſh'd note where rang'd in circling Rows,

The ſpacious Ring ſuperior Sportſmen ſhows.

Where Pride eclips'd no more her Infl'ence ſways,

But ſocial Freedom ſpreads her chearful Rays,

Where Dukes and Lords the grand Diverſion crown,

Like Phœbus ſhine, and dart Refulgence down ;

But

But hark the Drum! th' approaching Combat
ſhews,
Whoſe grateful Sound the waiting Crowd purſues,
When lo! diſtinguiſh'd Sportſmen born along
With mingled Crowds, the Pit promiſcuous throng,
Where various Bets engage their utmoſt Care,
As diff'rent Parties diff'rent Fancies bear,
Till Stakes requir'd unſtring'd the Purſes pour,
From various Fobs diſclos'd, a Golden Show'r;

Thus

Thus circling round the glitt'ring Guineas fly,

As various Odds become the gen'ral Cry,

And * *Five* to *Two* the nice Advent'rers ply;

Now Hope and Fear attend their dubious Fate,

Which various Sportſmen with Impatience wait;



* Five to two is a common Bett with the Groom Porters, when the Cocks on both Sides are judg'd of an Equality, againſt naming the Side which wins the two following Battles, but if either Party be judg'd ſuperior to th other, their Bett is then Five and a Half to two againſt the weakeſt winning two together.

Who diſcompos'd now chide the Feeder's Stay,

When lo! they come, and murm'ring clear the Way,

Stride o'er the Pit with blooming Verdure ſpread,

For Elegance and Uſe commodious made,

To ſhew the Marks that adverſe Sides require,

Which quells Debate, and ſooths the kindling Ire;

Yet fluſh'd with Spleen, and red'ning with Surprize,

Unbag the Fowl, to feaſt their longing Eyes.

Now

Now hoſtile Rage each daring Foe maintains,

And Death as Fate inclines alternate Reigns,

In various Shapes the miſſive Blow appears,

And dire Deſtruction 'midſt the Conflict bears ;

Now purple Life unloads the turgid Veins,

And guſhing down the crouded Circus ſtains,

Or ſtagnates, ſwells the Throat, and vital Air re-
ſtrains,

Contending Sportſmen now repining ſit,

Whilſt anxious Fear ſurrounds the gazing Pit.

As Death inclines and Fate impels the Blow,

Theſe gayly ſmile, and thoſe indignant glow;

Oft times the Brave a fatal Darkneſs mourn,

And ſtalking round, their Necks diſtorted turn,

Enrag'd to meet the Foe, now peck the Ground,

Riſe at their Breaſts, and ſpurning dart a Wound,

Now fractur'd Bones unnerve their warlike Pow'r,

And now the vanquiſh'd on their Pinions cow'r;

Yet

Yet oft when *Chanc'd* a ſwifter Exit ſhare,

Dart from the Foe and ſpring aloft in Air,

And whilſt the Crowd attend their dubious State,

Down, down, they fall, and ſoon reſign to Fate.

As curious Artiſts diff'rent Skill diſcloſe,

The various Weapon, diff'rent Temper ſhows,

Whoſe Length and Form indeed we various find,

As diff'rent Fancy ſways the Sportſman's Mind;

Yet

Yet by Experience taught the *longeſt* Size,

And thoſe which bending from the Socket riſe,

Superior Judges moſt diſtinguiſh'd prize;

Now curving Points too ſoft a Temper bear;

And now too hard their Brittleneſs declare;

Now on the Plain the treach'rous Weapons lye,

Now wing'd in Air the ſhiver'd Fragments fly;

Surpriz'd, chagrin'd, th' incautious Feeders gaze,

And **Smith* alone, ingenious Artiſt, praiſe;

The

* Mr. Thomas Smith, near Katherine-Street in the Strand, being allow'd the moſt curious and noted Maker of Silver Cock-Weapons.

The Valiant now in vain aſſail the Foe,

And fix'd as Fate no ſad Reluctance ſhow,

But tho' diſarm'd ſtill meet the Victor's Ire,

Glow with Revenge, and in their Wrath expire;

Now proſtrate lye extended on the Glade,

Th' inſulting Victor trampling o're the Dead.

Yet, gen'rous Muſe, with mild perſuaſive Art,

Tranſpoſe the Scene, and play the friendly Part;

Whene'er

Whene'er contending Parties clam'rous jar,

And Bets diſputed ſwell the verbal War,

Let ſage Reflection calmer Thoughts inſpire,

Compoſe the Diſcord, and reclaim their Ire;

By Candour ſway'd ye Sportſmen hence reſtore

The paſſive Mind, and rude Debate give o're,

Submit to Ref'rence and contend no more:

For ſhou'd precarious Fortune ſmile or frown,

Let ſocial Converſe your Diverſion crown,

Nor

Nor Party-Feuds foment, rekindling Strife,

*But bring the with'ring Olive back to Life.*

FINIS.

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